

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

*The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in this application.*

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1 – 5. (Canceled)

6. (Withdrawn) The ink jet printer as recited in claim 40, wherein said speed of ejection of said ink droplet is changed by changing a change degree in signal voltage to print said dot.

7. (Withdrawn) The ink jet printer as recited in claim 40, wherein said ink jet printer comprising an ink jet head ejecting said ink droplet, said ink jet head being moved at a prescribed speed in a prescribed direction, and said controller controls the printing position of said smaller dot based on the ejection speed of the ink droplet and said scanning speed.

8. (Previously Presented) The ink jet printer as recited in claim 39 further comprising determination means for determining a direction of the printing position of said smaller dot, said controller controlling the printing position of said smaller dot according to the determination.

9 - 10. (Canceled)

11. (Withdrawn) The ink jet printer as recited in claim 40, wherein in said timing control, the timing of applying signal voltage to print said dot is controlled.

12 – 13. (Canceled)

14. (Withdrawn) The ink jet printer as recited in claim 40, wherein the speed of ejection of said ink droplet is changed by changing a change degree in signal voltage to print said dot.

15. (Withdrawn) The ink jet printer as recited in claim 40, wherein said ink jet head is moved at a prescribed scanning speed in a prescribed direction, and said controller controls the printing position of the smoothing dots based on the ejection speed of the ink droplet and said scanning speed.

16. (Withdrawn) The ink jet printer as recited in claim 40 further comprising determination means for determining a direction of the printing position of said smoothing dots, said controller controlling the printing position of said smoothing dots according to the determination.

17 – 25. (Canceled)

26. (Previously Presented) The ink jet printer as recited in claim 39, wherein in said timing control, the timing of applying signal voltage to print said smoothing dot is controlled.

27. (Canceled)

28. (Withdrawn) An ink jet printer as recited in claim 40, wherein said speed of ejection of said ink droplet is controlled by varying a change degree in signal voltage to print said smoothing dot.

29 – 33. (Canceled)

34. (Previously Presented) The ink jet printer of claim 39, wherein said smaller dot and said image forming dot are ejected from said single nozzle during a single scan.

35. (Withdrawn) The ink jet printer of claim 40, wherein the smoothing droplets and image forming droplets are ejected from the single nozzle during a single scan.

36-38. (Canceled)

39. (Previously Presented) An ink jet printer ejecting a plurality of kinds of ink droplets of different sizes from a single nozzle depending upon data to be printed, thereby forming an image on a prescribed recording medium using dots of sizes corresponding to the sizes of the ink droplets, comprising:

an ink jet head for ejecting an image forming droplet and a smoothing droplet from a single nozzle based on data to be printed, the smoothing droplet being smaller than the image forming droplet, thereby printing dots of sizes corresponding to the sizes of the ink droplets on a prescribed recording medium;

a smoother for performing a smoothing process using the smoothing droplet to form a smoothing dot, wherein the distance between a center of the smaller size smoothing dot and a center of an image forming dot is smaller than the pitch of the image forming dot, and

a controller for controlling the smoother, thereby maintaining constant the speed of ejection of the ink droplet forming the smoothing dot and changing the timing of ejection of the ink droplet forming the smoothing dot, by ejecting the smoothing droplet at the same speed as that of the image forming droplet;

wherein the ink ejection is performed using a piezoelectric element, and a drive waveform applied to the piezoelectric element in ejecting image forming droplets is different from a drive waveform applied to the piezoelectric element in ejecting smoothing droplets.

40. (Withdrawn) An ink jet printer ejecting a plurality of kinds of ink droplets of different sizes from a single nozzle depending upon data to be printed, thereby forming an image on a prescribed recording medium using dots of sizes corresponding to the sizes of the ink droplets, comprising:

an ink jet head for ejecting an image forming droplet and a smoothing droplet from a single nozzle based on data to be printed, the smoothing droplet being

smaller than the image forming droplet, thereby printing dots of sizes corresponding to the sizes of the ink droplets on a prescribed recording medium;

a smoother for performing a smoothing process using the smoothing droplet to form a smoothing dot, wherein the distance between a center of the smaller size smoothing dot and a center of the image forming dot is smaller than the pitch of the image forming dot, and

a controller for controlling the smoother, thereby changing the speed of ejection of the ink droplet forming the smoothing dot in accordance with the size of the ink droplet forming the smoothing dot and changing the timing of ejection of the ink droplet forming the smoothing dot.

41. (Canceled)

42. (New) An ink jet printer ejecting a plurality of kinds of ink droplets of different sizes from a single nozzle depending upon data to be printed, thereby forming an image on a prescribed recording medium using dots of sizes corresponding to the sizes of the ink droplets, comprising:

an ink jet head having a piezoelectric element for ejecting an image forming droplet and a smoothing droplet from a single nozzle based on data to be printed, the smoothing droplet being smaller than the image forming droplet, thereby printing dots of sizes corresponding to the sizes of the ink droplets on a prescribed recording medium;

a smoother for performing a smoothing process using the smoothing droplet to form a smoothing dot, wherein the distance between a center of the smaller size

smoothing dot and a center of an image forming dot is smaller than the pitch of the image forming dot, and the position where the center of the smaller size smoothing dot is to be printed is changed within one of pixel areas arranged in a matrix form for printing dots therein, and

a controller for controlling the smoother.

43. (New) An ink jet printer according to Claim 42, wherein said controller maintains constant the speed of ejection of the ink droplet forming the smoothing dot and changes the timing of ejection of the ink droplet forming the smoothing dot, by ejecting the smoothing droplet at the same speed as that of the image forming droplet; and

wherein a drive waveform applied to the piezoelectric element in ejecting image forming droplets is different from a drive waveform applied to the piezoelectric element in ejecting smoothing droplets.

44. (New) An ink jet printer according to Claim 42, wherein said controller maintains constant the speed of ejection of the ink droplet forming the smoothing dot and changes the timing of ejection of the ink droplet forming the smoothing dot, by ejecting the smoothing droplet at the same speed as that of the image forming droplet.